

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	20 March 2018
Subject:	Flood Risk Management Group Report
Report of:	Annette Roberts, Head of Development Services
Corporate Lead:	Robert Weaver, Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Cllr E J MacTiernan, Lead Member for Built Environment
Number of Appendices:	Two

Executive Summary:

The report provides an update on the progress against the Flood Risk Management Action Plan.

Recommendation:

To CONSIDER the annual report on progress against the Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan.

Reasons for Recommendation:

At its meeting on 21 March 2017, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that progress against the Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan would be monitored by the Committee on an annual basis.

Resource Implications:

No additional resources are required as part of this report.

Legal Implications:

The Council has powers, under Section 14A of the Land Drainage Act 1991, to undertake flood

risk management work where it considers that the work is desirable, having regard to the local flood risk management strategy for its area, and where the purpose of the work is to manage a flood risk in the Council's area from an ordinary watercourse. The works that the Council is permitted to do under this section is wide-ranging and includes the construction or maintenance of existing works (which include buildings, structures, watercourses, drainage works and machinery).

Where the works are to be carried out on land not owned by the Council, agreements should be put in place to cover consent of the owner for the works to be carried out and responsibilities for maintenance. However; under Section 64 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the local authority may, at all reasonable times, enter any land for the purpose of exercising any functions under the Act.

The Council's contract rules will need to be followed when appointing contractors.

Where there are joint projects, such as with the Environment Agency, the Council should enter into agreements which set out each party's obligations and responsibilities in relation to these projects, including ongoing maintenance of the works.

Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) has made grants available to the District Councils to undertake flood alleviation schemes. An agreement between Gloucestershire County Council and the Borough Council has been established and will be implemented on all new schemes costing in excess of £1,000.

Risk Management Implications:

A failure to deliver against the action plan will mean that the authority will not be adequately managing the risk of flooding in the borough, particularly in relation to land within the local authority ownership.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Performance against the action plan is monitored at the Flood Risk Management Group on a quarterly basis.

Environmental Implications:

Any work involving natural watercourses or the cutting back of trees or hedges will be carried out at the time of year that has least impact on wildlife and habitat (e.g. bird nesting season). Where necessary the appropriate licences will be applied for.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 At its meeting on 21 March 2017, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to the Executive Committee that:

- a) the revised Terms of Reference and Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan be adopted;
- b) a review of these Terms of Reference take place within the first 12 months of the term of the new Council; and
- c) progress against the Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

1.2 The Executive Committee approved these recommendations and the Flood Risk Management Group (FRMG) meets on a quarterly basis and is chaired by the Lead Member for the Built Environment.

2.0 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

2.1 The action plan at Appendix 1 is based on land drainage projects monitored by the Flood Risk Management Group. The action plan is a 'living' document to which funding or partnership opportunities can be added as and when they arise.

2.2 The Flood Risk Management Group last met on 26 February 2018. The action plan represents the report that was presented at that meeting.

2.3 The Action Plan is split up into a number of areas

- 1) Live Capital Projects
- 2) Tewkesbury Borough Council Programme of watercourse maintenance
 - TBC owned watercourse maintenance works 2017/18
 - TBC owned watercourse maintenance proposed 2018/19
- 3) Forward Plan - Future Maintenance Issues
- 4) Update on grant applications
 - Existing schemes
 - Funding bids in progress

3.0 LIVE CAPITAL PROJECTS

3.1 In terms of the live capital projects, the action plan shows one project named the Grange Field. This is a project to create the diversion of a channel to create meandering watercourse with associated wetland and wildflower meadow features. There is £180,000 allocated to this project. The Council is working in partnership with Environment Agency (EA) and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT) to deliver this project. The tender for the civil engineering work on this project is open. This contract is currently programmed to begin on the 19 March 2018.

3.2 In 2017, the flood relief project at Chaceley (funded from a grant from Gloucestershire County Council) was completed on time and under budget. The scheme consisted of constructing a new twin outfall to the River Severn. The main function is to help evacuate flood water quicker than at present. There is also a preventative element which will be greatly enhanced once our working partner, the Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board, has cleared and regraded a connecting watercourse. Following a presentation to the Chaceley Parish Council public meeting, the Council received kind words of praise and thanks in an email.

4.0 TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL OWNED WATERCOURSE MAINTENANCE WORKS 2017/18

4.1 The Council owns various parcels of land across the Borough and some of these have watercourses either running through them or adjacent to them. This means that the Council is a 'riparian owner' with responsibilities to maintain these watercourses in good condition. In 2009, the Council agreed to increase the land drainage revenue budget in order to allow for routine maintenance work to be carried out. During 2017/18, 98 projects have been undertaken across the borough including desilting, unblocking, flail cutting and hedge cutting, as well as reactionary work such as clearing fallen trees etc. This amounted to £45,444.

5.0 TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL FUTURE MAINTENANCE WORKS PROPOSED 2018/19

5.1 The action plan also contains the programmed future maintenance works proposed in 2018/19 and includes 37 projects across the borough involving desilting, flail cutting and clearance of shrubs amounting to a total of £22,868. This does not take account of reactionary requirements or those areas where an annual assessment is made as to whether work is actually required. This will be monitored in the 2018/19 year through Officer updates to the FRMG meetings. There are also six projects listed on the Forward Plan – Future Maintenance Issues - which may require potential investment in the coming years.

6.0 GRANT APPLICATIONS – EXISTING SCHEMES

6.1 In relation to the grant applications, the action plan details four existing schemes which are currently live. These are being led by Gloucestershire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority with funding coming from Flood Defence Grant in Aid, Local Levy and the County Council. They consist of:

- Bishops Cleeve, Woodmancote and Southam - To deliver Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) outputs. The SWMP identified a range of measures including diversion, storage and property protection. The allocated funding for this scheme is £900,000. The scheme is being commissioned which will be subject to consultation before tenders for project are invited in 2018.
- Churchdown – To deliver Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) outputs. SWMP has identified range of measures including diversion, storage and property protection. The allocated funding for this scheme is £120,000; however, it is likely that this funding will be deferred until 2018/19.
- Prestbury / Whaddon - To deliver two flood storage areas with targeted Property Level Protection measures. The allocated funding for this scheme is £2.2 million. Work is expected to be completed in autumn 2018.
- Brockworth – To deliver Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) outputs. SWMP has identified range of measures including diversion, storage and property protection. The allocated funding for this scheme is £200,000; however, it is likely that this funding will be deferred until 2018/19.

7.0 FUNDING BIDS IN PROGRESS

7.1 In relation to funding bids in progress, there is a notional allocation for Gloucestershire of £3M under the Priority Axis 6: Preserving and Protecting the Environment and Promoting Resource Efficiency under the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) - European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding. The project, as part of the wider consortium bid surrounding Green Infrastructure in the JCS area, is still awaiting the grant funding agreement which is expected to be confirmed in spring 2018. The project surrounds the betterment of areas of public open space of low ecological value into a network of vibrant mini-meadow areas. This will provide significant multiple benefits in the way of flood risk, biodiversity, water quality, amenity and anti-social behaviour. It should also lessen the Council's future maintenance liability due to a much reduced cutting regime.

8.0 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

8.1 Alongside the above projects, the Flood Risk Management Group has overseen the review of the Flood and Water Management Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This document was drafted, consulted on and has subsequently been adopted by the Council and is now a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

9.0 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

9.1 Tewkesbury Borough Council, together with Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC), is also working with other partners to help communities in Tewkesbury Borough increase their resilience to floods; this includes flood warden training which took place in January 2018.

10.0 CONCLUSION

10.1 As well as continuing progress on specific projects and the production of the reviewed Supplementary Planning Document detailed above, the Council has been, and continues to be, successful in drawing in money from various sources, in particular the Lead Local Flood Authority to help fund further major capital projects which help protect our residents. Officers will continue to identify and apply for funding in the future, so there will be a constant, continuing process of working with local communities to identify flood alleviation projects.

11.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

11.1 None.

12.0 CONSULTATION

12.1 None.

13.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

13.1 Flood and Surface Water Supplementary Planning Document.

14.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

14.1 None.

15.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

15.1 Tewkesbury Borough Council employs a Flood Risk Management Engineer. Part of the post holder's responsibilities is to identify flood risk management funding opportunities and submit bids, as well as to monitor progress on the action plan.

16.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

16.1 Flood risk management reduces the likelihood that local residents and businesses will have flood water entering their properties and the consequential impact that such an event would have on the health, welfare and finances of those affected.

17.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

17.1 None.

18.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

18.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 21 March 2017
Executive Committee – 26 April 2017

Background Papers: None

Contact Officer: Annette Roberts, Head of Development Services
01684 272095 annette.roberts@teWKesbury.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan – February 2018

Appendix 2 - Grange Field Scheme Diagram.